

# DANA

AN IRISH MAGAZINE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

No. 7

NOVEMBER

1904

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*SIX MONTHS                    -                    3s. 6d.*

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*Prepaid subscriptions should be sent to the Editorial Offices, 26, Dawson Chambers, Dawson Street, Dublin.*

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# DANA

AN IRISH MAGAZINE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

AN TIGHEARNA.

A MEMORY OF PARNELL.

He always seemed to me a creature from another world, or a survival of some older type of man. Not that in ordinary respects he differed from the usual race of all mankind, having their passions, weaknesses, and all the rest developed to the full, together with an incapacity to get his stirrup leathers the same length, on horseback, when he rode. His strangeness was, as is the strangeness of a faun or hamadryad, beings we all know did exist and have their being, so strongly has their personality been drawn for us and cut in stone.

Occasionally we feel that characters in poems and in pictures are far more real than the sham human beings who go about in millions, pretending to be men.

The subject of my recollection, and how sad it is to rack the half sealed chambers of the mind for the impressions of dead friends left on it, as the sun leaves pictures, so some think, indelible on every stone, was one of those whose death strikes us as an injustice and in some way a mistake.

Crossing St. James' Street I well remember seeing on a bill, "Death of the Irish Leader," and thinking that it was some error of the press.

Your politician dies, and it appears quite natural. Last week he had his knighthood; a month ago became the last of all the peers, received the garter at the last royal birthday, and now resumes the sleep which was but three parts broken during the whole course of his life. One pauses, recalls his small peculiarities, his tricks of speech and manner, and then forgets him, half-pitying, half with contempt, thinking an ill-graced actor has passed through the wings, into the freedom of the street, and left behind him nothing but the remembrance of his faults, when once the electro-plated glamour of the daily press has been rubbed off.

But when a man, such as was Parnell, passes, all the infirmities of life fall off, and only his originality and greatness stay. Then it becomes a marvel that the multitude of rats has been the undoing of the lion. One tries to cypher out in what his influence lay, then gives it up, and is content to say, I knew him, may he rest well at last.

In the dull drab and common world of English life where everything is done upon the lowest level that the intellect of man can compass, in which our Gladdies and our Dizzies, with Pam and Bright and Buckshot-Foster and the rest, appear like vestrymen unglorified, a figure such as his seemed almost insolent.

It is too soon perhaps to try to mark his place in history, but since Old Noll (hero in England, and in Ireland devil), perhaps no stronger character has played its part upon the boards of the great theatre at Westminster. He had not eloquence as it is generally appraised, although at times the intensity of hate he bore us and our twaddling institutions, gave him a glacial fire, which scorched even the dull wet blankets of the House, where all is commonplace.

He was not deeply read, even in the history of the land for which he fought. He was not humorous, nor had he wit, but now and then inflections came into his voice, which stirred one more than all the spurred-up caperings of orators, as when he finished up a phrase with "This is going on to-day in Ireland," in which he put such force and venom that the word Ireland seemed to die upon his lips in froth.

I cannot think of him as popular even at home upon his own estate, nor yet at school, still less with his own followers, especially with those of them who sold their Lord, and quite omitted to make sure the thirty pieces should be paid; and when they lost them did not have the grace to hang themselves.

Not popular, in the hail-fellow-well-met and loudly cheered conception of the word, but yet with an attraction for all women whom he came across, who were drawn to him by his careless treatment of them, and by the wish that nature has implanted in their sex, to be the rulers of all men who stand above their kind.

Straying about the House of Commons after the fashion of a new boy at a school, I chanced to sit down quite unthinkingly upon a bench. An Irish legislator edged up and whispered, "You're sitting in his seat."

To this I answered something about the seats being free unless they had a name attached to them, and I fear bade

my interlocutor fare to Gehenna by the shortest route. A gentle voice behind me almost whispered in my ear, "Quite right, the seats are free."

This laid the first stone to the building of a desultory friendship which lasted till his death.

Occasionally we dined together, not talking very much, as we had nothing very much in common, except a love of horses.

Of them Parnell knew little, and the little that I knew was almost absolutely from the colonial point of view, so that our theories did not conflict. On politics we never talked, as upon almost every point we disagreed, he leading a great party and I but a mere unit of an amorphous crowd of Nonconformists, Temperance Reformers, Deceased Wives' Sisters' Monomaniacs, and Single Taxers, with all the faddists and the dried fruit of outworn Liberal politics which at that time the tide of Liberalism had left like jelly fish and seaweed, stranded and dying on the beach.

And what a beach it was, strewn with the dead remains of Leagues and Federations and Societies, mostly composed of Treasurer and Secretary, long-haired and stammering speakers, all with their theories of prompt regeneration for the body politic, and a collecting box to shove beneath the public's nose.

We raved, we ranted, and we called on Englishmen to rise, to embrace the movement and ourselves, and comprehend that social and political emancipation was at hand and that we were the men.

Amongst this herd of addle-brained and sometimes generous, sometimes self-interested reformers (but in all instances belated), which the late lowering of the franchise had let loose upon the world, and most of whom had not sufficient wit to run a coffee stall, the figure of Parnell stood out, like the Old Man of Hoy stands out against the sea. The little waves of the above referred to muddletonians, who with their iteration damnable and advocacy of reforms long dead, surged round him, almost unnoticed and unnoticeable.

The larger scum of Conservative and Liberal, each again occupied with questions which had long been superannuated, left him unmoved.

The party leaders feared and hated him, for he despised them, and his outlook upon politics seemed but to point out all their incapacity and lack of strength.

Gladstone, who though in talk for fifty years, never contrived to say a single thing either original or worth remem-

bering, was overbalanced by him, and Salisbury looked on him as Turk looks at a native Christian who rebels, whilst Morley, from the dreary, arid heights of Mount Philosophus, admired and wondered but supported loyally, although perhaps feeling a little hurt at having to play the second violin to one who knew no Greek. Balfour, by virtue of his aestheticism, was repelled, and did not hesitate to shoot out mildly philosophic lips. Churchill admired, and perhaps intrigued with him whom without doubt he thought a rebel, but in politics and love all that succeeds is fair. Chamberlain very likely dreamed of some municipal Home Rule, with Parnell as a county councillor glorified, a parliament for gas and sewage, existing by his will in Dublin, and all the Irish Nationalists, apparelled in frieze coats and battered hats stuck with dudheens, shillelaghs in their hands, all dancing round and singing "long live Birmingham!"

No one else counted, and in this motley crew of dreamers and of dullards, with here and there an able man upon the make to give consistency, the Irish Leader jostled for a place.

Whatever were his faults, and I suppose that being human, he had many of them, one thing is clear to me, that above all he hated England and her ways. With what a seething coldness, as of ice upon the edges of a crater, he would say "your country" or "your Queen." Even the House of Commons, stupid as it was, would shiver, and red-faced Tory Squires, and Nonconformists reared on seed-cake and lemonade, rise in their seats, shaking their mottled or their plebeian fists at his calm smiling face.

It did us good to hear him stammer through a speech, misquoting all his notes, halting and trying back, and pouring all the vitriol of his contempt upon us as we sat.

It seemed as if some sort of incoherent Daniel had come to judgment and was about to pass his sentence on us all.

The British Parliament for generations had listened to the tirades of all kinds of Irishmen, but they had all been of another sort.

In them, the Saxon was a tyrant and a brute, a sort of Juggernaut, feared and yet envied, who had laid waste the land. But now he figured as an ass, and as ridiculous, whilst all the Irishry, taking their cue from their chief's speeches, publicly thanked their gods that they were Irish, and professed to think that the word English, applied with reference to themselves, was more than infidel, and quite as bad as Protestant, or thief. Thus did the Chief make it



impossible for British ministers to take up the "poor Patrick" attitude, which in the past had always been a trump.

No one, I think, was ever hated by the House as was Parnell, and he returned its hate a hundredfold, taking delight in gibing at it, and making it absurd.

Nothing offended him so much as when some hypocritical "Noncom," whom he and Gladstone had kicked round into Home Rule, would talk about the "union of our hearts," and prophesy that soon all difference of race would be obliterated. Then as he ground his teeth, and his pale cheek grew white with rage, he sometimes muttered "Damn them," with so much unction and such fervency, that one felt sure his prayer, if not immediately vouchsafed, would yet be taken *ad avusandum*, as the lawyers say, and perhaps be of avail. But whether it was answered, or fell harmless on the unwholesome air of parliament, it had the effect somehow of setting one a-thinking of how great a fraud the British Empire was, and rousing one out of the feeling of sublime contentment with ourselves, with which we of the Celto-Saxon race are prone to look at all things here below, knowing that we enjoy a place apart and specially reserved for us in mansions in the skies with all repairs performed for us, by the Creator of the World.

When we debated with much circumstance, and with citation of innumerable unnecessary figures (the ever-present refuge of a dullard in a speech), some weighty matter of a railroad in the Midland Counties, it was a sight to see the Irish Leader lounge into the House, stroking his beard and pulling his moustache with long white fingers, on which dull sparkled his historic sapphire ring. He would remark half confidentially to his lieutenant, "Biggar, I think that this debate ought not to finish before twelve o'clock." To which his Sancho Panza would reply, "It's quite impossible; I've let the boys away." Then, absently, as if he had never seen the man, or at that instant suddenly became aware that he persisted still in living, Parnell would say, "Tell Gallagher to speak." "Gallagher, Sir, the only thing he knows is butter." "Well, let him speak on butter."

And in an instant Gallagher would rise, quite unprepared, and speaking, maybe, for the first time in that august assembly which, as a general rule, strikes us of the predominant partnership stark dumb.

With figures and with facts, which all looked feasible, the string-pulled member-marionette would thunder forth

on the injustice done to Irish industries in general, and that to Irish butter in particular, by the abominable Bill before the House. After an hour, with perspiration running down his face, he would begin to talk upon the Irish question as a whole, be pulled up by the Speaker, engage in wrangles with the Tories, and speak and speak, with illustrations of his theme, with so much vigour and such aptness, that you began to think a hideous wrong was going to be done. Just about midnight Parnell might saunter in and either say, "I think I will not speak," or "Biggar, tell that fool to stop; I wish to say a word." Then word would somehow be conveyed to the rapt orator, who would subside, perhaps in the very middle of a phrase, and Parnell, rising, would proceed, apparently quite coldly but with shut fists, and a light foam about the corners of his mouth, to distil vitriol, drop by drop, into the very souls of Englishmen, till Gladstone, putting on his hat, would leave the House, and comfortable Liberals, who had been cultivating a Cork or Limerick brogue, by means of which to show goodwill to Ireland, would shiver in their broadcloth coats, and curse the day that made him their ally.

No one, I think, since Oliver the Great and Good (I write for the mere Englishry,) has made the House of Commons tremble to its cowardly depths, as did Parnell, and never Irishman before or since his time, if we except Hugh O'Neill, has ever treated politically with England upon equal terms.

Undoubtedly, he both despised and hated Gladstone, who on his part showed plainly that he was in the presence of a stronger man, and though after his death he damned him with faint praise, could not have been much disappointed when, after his nine days' waiting, the Nonconformist cat jumped as it did, and shut Home Rule off for a hundred years.

Not that I think that Gladstone did not believe in Ireland's wrongs, but that he did not wish to see an Irish parliament led by a man far stronger than himself.

During the days of "sturm und drang" when he was fighting for his soul, I saw him now and then as one sees figures in a dream.

Once seated in an old-fashioned eating house off the Strand, he wandered in, and seeing me, sat down and talked during the dinner which he could not eat. We spoke of horses, of which as I have said, he knew but little, and I not overmuch, and then sauntered down to the House, to find it counted out.

Then came his death and funeral, with as it seemed, no one ashamed in Ireland, and almost everybody secretly pleased in London, as if they felt an enemy of England was gone, as in fact was the case, for he who lets a Briton see he does not reverence him and his country, commits the crime against the British Holy Ghost, a spirit plethoric and heavy, generous but overbearing, and as well stuffed with pride as is an airship or a fire balloon with gas.

Let him sleep well, a Protestant amongst the serried graves of those who lie looking towards Rome, whilst they await the Trumpet's call. A Saxon leader of a Celtic race, a man who, though no orator, yet held enthralled a parliament that lives on talk. Well may his spirit hover hesitatingly between the towers of Westminster, where at least he forced respect, and the grey columns on College Green, the unfaithful Mecca, which he never lived to reach.

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM.

GLASNEVIN, OCTOBER 9th 1904.

They peer about his grave with curious eyes,  
And for his sin they pity him, their chief,  
With miserable mockery of grief :  
Beyond their littleness serene he lies,  
Nor heeds the insult of their sympathies,  
This man pre-eminent by strong belief  
In his own heart—a little while, for brief  
The resting-time is when a hero dies.

Near to God's heart by greatness of thy heart,  
And nearer by thy sin, O strong of will !  
Send out thy spirit like a sword and kill  
Their littleness, nor longer dwell apart :  
Send forth thy spirit like a sword, and burn  
Through these a pathway for thy soul's return.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

PREFACE TO A NEW EDITION OF "CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN."

DEAR little book, what shall I say about thee? Belated offspring of mine, out of print for twenty years, what shall I say in praise of thee? For twenty years I have only seen thee in French, and in this English text thou comest to me like an old love, at once a surprise and a recollection. Dear little book, I would say nothing about thee if I could help it, but a publisher pleads, and "No" is a churlish word. So for him I will say that I like thy prattle; that while travelling in a railway carriage on my way to the country of "Esther Waters," I passed my station by, and had to hire a carriage and drive across the downs.

Like a learned Abbé I delighted in the confessions of this young man, a *naïf* young man, a little vicious in his *naïveté*, who says that his soul must have been dipped in Lethe so deeply that he came into the world without remembrance of previous existence. He can find no other explanation for the fact that the world always seems to him more new, more wonderful than it did to anyone he ever met on his faring; every wayside acquaintance seemed old to this amazing young man, and himself seemed to himself the only young thing in the world. Am I imitating the style of these early writings? A man of letters who would parody his early style is no better than the ancient light-o'-love who wears a wig and reddens her cheeks.

I must turn to the book to see how far this is true. The first thing I catch sight of is some French, an astonishing dedication written in the form of an epitaph, an epitaph upon myself, for it appears that part of me was dead even when I wrote "Confessions of a Young Man." The youngest have a past, and this epitaph dedication, printed in capital letters, informs me that I have embalmed my past, that I have wrapped the dead in the finest winding sheet. It would seem I am a little more difficult to please to-day, for I perceived in the railway train a certain coarseness in its tissue, and here and there a tangled thread.

I would have wished for more care, for *un peu plus de toilette*. There is something pathetic in the loving regard of the middle-aged man for the young man's coat (I will not say winding-sheet, that is a morbidity from which the middle-aged shrink). I would set his coat collar straighter,

I would sweep some specks from it. But can I do aught for this youth, does he need my supervision? He was himself, that was his genius; and I sit at gaze. My melancholy is like her's—the ancient light-o'-love of whom I spoke just now, when she sits by the fire in the dusk, a miniature of her past self in her hand.

## II.

This edition has not been printed from old plates, no chicanery of that kind: it has been printed from new type, and it was brought about by Walter Pater's evocative letter. (It wasn't, but I like to think that it was). Off and on, his letter was sought for during many years, hunted for through all sorts of portfolios and bookcases, but never found until it appeared miraculously, just as the proof of my Pater article was being sent back to the printer, the precious letter transpired—shall I say "transpired?"—through a crack in the old bookcase.

BRASENOSE COLLEGE,

*Mar. 4,*

MY DEAR, AUDACIOUS MOORE,—Many thanks for the "Confessions" which I have read with great interest, and admiration for your originality—your delightful criticisms—your Aristophanic joy, or at least enjoyment, in life—your unflinching liveliness. Of course, there are many things in the book I don't agree with. But then, in the case of so satiric a book, I suppose one is hardly expected to agree or disagree. What I cannot doubt is the literary faculty displayed. "Thou com'st in such a questionable shape!" I feel inclined to say on finishing your book; "shape" morally, I mean; not in reference to style.

You speak of my own work very pleasantly; but my enjoyment has been independent of that. And still I wonder how much you may be losing, both for yourself and for your writings, by what, in spite of its gaiety and good-nature and genuine sense of the beauty of many things, I must still call a cynical, and therefore exclusive, way of looking at the world. You call it only "realistic." Still!

With sincere wishes for the future success of your most entertaining pen,—Very sincerely yours,

WALTER PATER.

Remember, reader, that this letter was written by the last great English writer, by the author of "Imaginary Portraits," the most beautiful of all prose books. I should like to break off and tell of my delight in reading "Imaginary Portraits," but I have told my delight elsewhere; go, seek out what I have said in the pages of the

*Pall Mall Magazine* for August 1904, for here I am obliged to tell you of myself. I give you Pater's letter, for I wish you to read this book with reverence; never forget that Pater's admiration has made this book a sacred book. Never forget that.

My special pleasure in these early pages was to find that I thought about Pater twenty years ago as I think about him now, and shall certainly think of him till time everlasting, world without end. I have been accused of changing my likes and dislikes—no one has changed less than I, and this book is proof of my fidelity to my first ideas; the ideas I have followed all my life are in this book—dear crescent moon rising in the south-east above the trees at the end of the village green. It was in that ugly but well-beloved village on the south coast I discovered my love of Protestant England. It was on the downs that the instinct of Protestantism lit up in me.

But when Zola asked me why I preferred Protestantism to Roman Catholicism I could not answer him.

He had promised to write a preface for the French translation of the "Mummer's Wife"; the translation had to be revised, months and months passed away, and forgetting all about the "Mummer's Wife," I expressed my opinion about Zola, which had been changing, a little too fearlessly, and in view of my revolt he was obliged to break his promise to write a Preface, and this must have been a great blow, for he was a man of method, to whom any change of plan was disagreeable and unnerving. He sent a letter, asking me to come to Médan, he would talk to me about the "Confessions." Well do I remember going there with dear Alexis in the May-time, the young corn six inches high in the fields, and oh, my delight in the lush luxuriance of l'Oise. That dear morning is remembered, and the poor master who reproved me a little sententiously, is dead. He was sorrowful in that dreadful room of his, fixed up with stained glass and morbid antiquities. He lay on a sofa lecturing me till breakfast. Then I thought reproof was over, but after a walk in the garden we went upstairs and he began again, saying he was not angry. "It is the law of nature," he said, "for children to devour their parents. I do not complain." I think he was aware he was playing a part, his sofa was his stage; and he lay there theatrical as Leo XI or Beerbohm Tree, saying that the Roman Church was an artistic church, that its rich externality and ceremonial were pagan. But I think he knew even then, at the back

of his mind, that I was right; that is why he pressed me to give reasons for my preference. Zola came to hate Catholicism as much as I, and his hatred was for the same reason as mine; we both learnt that any religion which robs a man of the right of free-will and private judgment degrades the soul, renders it lethargic and timid, takes the edge off the intellect. Zola lived to write that "the Catholic countries are dead, and the clergy are the worms in the corpses." The observation is "quelconque." My preference would have been that he had said that since the Reformation no born Catholic has written a book of literary value! He would have had to concede that some converts have written well; the convert still retains a little of his ancient freedom, some of the intellectual virility he acquired elsewhere, but the born Catholic is still-born. However we may disapprove of Catholicism we must approve of converts. Cardinal Manning was aware of the advantages of a Protestant bringing up, and he often said that he was glad he had been born a Protestant. His Eminence was, therefore, of opinion that the Catholic faith should be reserved, and exclusively, for converts, and in this he showed his practical sense, for it is easy to imagine a country prosperous in which all the inhabitants should be brought up Protestants or agnostics, and in which conversions to Rome are only permitted after a certain age or in clearly defined circumstances. There would be something beyond mere practical wisdom in such law-giving, an exquisite sense of the pathos of human life and its requirements; scapulars, indulgences and sacraments are needed by the weak and the aging, sacraments especially. "They make you believe but they stupify you;" these words are Pascal's, the great light of the Catholic Church.

### III.

My Protestant sympathies go back very far, further back than these Confessions; I find them in a French sonnet, crude and diffuse in versification, of the kind which finds favour with the very young, a sonnet which I should not publish did it not remind me of two things especially dear to me, my love of France and Protestantism.

Je t'apporte mon drame, o poète sublime,  
Ainsi qu'un écolier au maître sa leçon :  
Ce livre avec fierté porte comme écusson  
Le sceau qu'en nos esprits ta jeune gloire imprime.

Accepte, tu verras la foi mêlée au crime,  
 Se souiller dans le sang sacré de la raison,  
 Quand surgit, rédempteur du vieux peuple saxon,  
 Luther à Wittemberg comme Christ à Solime.

Jamais de la cité le mal entier ne fuit,  
 Hélas, et son autel y fume dans la nuit ;  
 Mais notre âge a ceci de pareil à l'aurore

Que c'est un divin cri du chanteur éternel,  
 Le tien, qui pour forcer le jour tardif d'éclorre  
 Déchire avec splendeur le voile épars du ciel.

I find not only my Protestant sympathies in the "Confessions" but a proud agnosticism, and an exalted individualism which in certain passages leads the reader to the sundered rocks about the cave of Zarathustra. My book was written before I heard that splendid name, before "Zarathustra" was written ; and though the doctrine was hardly formulated it is in the Confessions as Darwin is in Wallace. Here ye shall find me, the germs of all I have written are in the Confessions—Esther Waters, and Modern Painting, my love of France, the country as Pater would say of my instinctive election, and all my prophecies. Manet, Degas, Whistler, Monet, Pissaro, all these have come into their inheritance. Those whom I brushed aside, where are they ? Stevenson, so well described as the best-dressed young man that ever walked in the Burlington Arcade, has slipped into nothingness despite the journalists and Mr. Sidney Colvin's batch of letters. Poor Colvin, he made a mistake, he should have hopped on to Pater.

Were it not for a silly phrase about George Eliot, who surely was no more than one of those dull clever people, unlit by any ray of genius, I might say with Swinburne I have nothing to regret, nothing to withdraw. Maybe a few flippant remarks about my private friends ; but to withdraw them would be unmanly, unintellectual, and no one may re-write his confessions.

A moment ago I wrote, I have nothing to regret except a silly phrase about George Eliot. I was mistaken, there is this preface ; if one succeeds in explaining oneself in a book, a preface is unnecessary, and if one has failed to explain oneself in one's book, it is still more unnecessary to explain oneself in a preface.

GEORGE MOORE.



## CONCERNING A CREAMERY.

## I.

MUTUAL aid was once a great factor in the social and economic life of the Irish cottage. When they spun and wove at home everything in connection with spinning and weaving was done by mutual aid. A house wanting a particular piece of work done would get a score or so of hands from among the neighbours. Such a party, brought together by the necessity for mutual aid, was called a *meitheal* (mahil). In the part of the country that I am familiar with (a district of the Midlands not yet denuded by emigration) the tradition of mutual aid still survives in mahils for outdoor work that needs many hands (turf cutting generally). Again, groups of farmers here and there put money together to buy spraying-machines. They speak of this as a "join." The "join" might work into native co-operation, lifting traditional mutual aid out of the rut of the primitive, were it not that the man who holds the machine is generally too good-natured to refuse any non-member who asks a loan of it. The machine is always out when members of the group want it, and the "join" falls through after a season. However, the feeling for mutual aid, the tradition of mutual aid is there. I do not know that the Organisation Society have ever made a conscious attempt to knit the new co-operation to the old tradition. Co-operation as applied to Creameries has been talked of as something outside, something foreign. The mass of farmers with all their intelligence and all their interest in ideas, misunderstand the new co-operation. I was in a house last year where the talk at the *céilidh* was of the new Creamery which Father K— was anxious to start. I shall try to give the point of view of the various people there.

First of all there was the farmer-shopkeeper, Mr. MacGowan, grave, self-contained, seldom-speaking, steadier than the farmers because of his application to business day after day, more enterprising because more in touch with certainties. In public he was associated with the National movement; in private, as a man of property, he expressed grave doubts about Home Rule. Then there was Matthew, a small farmer, a genuine progressive. He hardly understood the idea, but he took shares in the

Creamery, just because of his interest in ideas. MacGowan already belonged to the new Conservative party that is being formed in the country against the Home Rule change. Neither lands bought out nor careers opened to his sons would make Matthew a conservative. Brian was there too, a good farmer, a cautious man. His home was garnished within and without, and he did splendidly in the old rut. He did not dislike ideas. He was almost impervious to them, and when they did penetrate he was too filled with wonder to think of putting them into action. Finally there was Murty, a young labourer. Labourers have no milk, and therefore, no interest in Creameries. They stand to lose the contributions of milk which their employers give them. Murty was not a good worker. He had a diseased will, and would be always a failure with good intentions. He had the literary mind and with it the mastery of the withering phrase.

"I'd think it a shame," he said, "to let a cart they'd have gathering come to my door. To lave the house without a drop of milk for a man or a child for the sake of the few shillings they'd give."

"Their cart will never trouble your door, Murty," a woman said quietly.

"No matter. If I'd only the milk of a goat I wouldn't let them have it—not if they were to give me a cow for it. It's the like of these notions that's setting up the rich and keeping down the poor."

"And what sort of a country would it turn out to be when the people would be eating butter out of a Creamery?" Brian asked. "Every year less and less is being done at home. And what will we do with the women at all, at all? I give you my hand and word I'll never send a pint of milk to them."

"Nor I either," said an old woman, "though Father K— is pressing and pressing me to promise it. Indeed, says I, and I think it shame not to churn every drop I milk."

I replied to Brian. I said it was unfortunately true that less and less was being done at home (I knew that the spinning and weaving of the old time was in his mind). I suggested that women, freed from some of the labour of churning and marketing, might find some finer employment.

Matthew said "Them that knows better than you or me say that the Creameries are doing a lot of good. I'll give this all the back I can."

Mr. MacGowan spoke. He said that those who knew most thought that a Creamery would do a deal of good. They were giving their time to it and putting money in it, and the people ought to follow them.

When he went out Murty spoke against the wise ones of the parish. He said they would not interest themselves in the Creamery unless they were sure of making something out of the people by it. He was listened to. Fortunately the working of the Creamery gave no cause for complaint afterwards.

I heard the project discussed elsewhere with eagerness and intelligence. When I think of the intellectual drain from rural places, I am always astonished at the amount of fine intelligence still left. One clever boy becomes a priest, another a teacher, another a civil servant. The clever girls emigrate. This steady drain should make for decadence, yet I think the level of intelligence is as high to-day as it was two or three generations ago.

## II.

The splendid energy of Father K— overcame the inertia of the parish. Shares were taken and milk promised. It was inevitable that the farmer-shopkeepers should take over a good deal of the management. They are competent men, but I do not think their interest lies in developing the Creamery along certain lines. For instance an egg centre at the Creamery might compete with their own trade.

The establishment of a Creamery has many effects on the people and the district. I will try to state some of them from the point of view of the small farmer, viz—of the man with two or three cows.

The Irish peasant is badly nourished by habit. He cares little when he eats or what he eats, because he is a survival of those who could do with least nurture. A proverb of his, "To eat as much as a Protestant," comes out of generations of oppression and distress. He is still badly nourished. Milk and butter rather than meat are the staple support of his house. If he supplies the Creamery, he has only Saturday night's and Sunday's milk for his house. This is not sufficient, and the children come short of their nourishment.

Of course with four or five cattle he could supply the Creamery and still have sufficient for household needs. The profits resulting from co-operation might enable him to add to his stock. But the danger of adding to the idle grazing lands lies that way.

On the other hand the Creamery is bound to influence his house for good. The discipline of cleanliness that it entails, the certain returns at the end of the month will do much to lift him out of the rut of primitive ways. Here I would note the good effect of a break with the tradition of agricultural rudeness. Postmen, policemen, teachers, make the best farmers, because they come back to the soil with their own ideas. Again labourer's cottages generally are more neatly kept than the farmhouses, they are out of the old tradition.

It is the strong farmer and the farmer-shopkeeper who will gain most by the Creameries. The small farmer and the labourer will profit too, if not through the Creameries, through the co-operative movement generally. The market towns stand to lose. The movement will have a profound effect, were it only that its success will encourage the rich farmers to invest money in productive things in their own district. It will give them a business training too and educate them to deal with the affairs of the country.

PADRAIC COLUM.

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### WINIFRED.

Spring, and the thin blue Springtide air  
Shone round me as I rowed  
Between the meadow borders where  
A freshening water flowed ;  
The young leaves on the willow sprays  
Scarce hid the linnets green,  
And pink and white in orchard ways  
The blossoming clouds were seen.  
And pink and white her sweet face was,  
Her brown hair blown half free,  
Who, when I landed on the grass,  
Brought out the ale to me.

She said her name was Winifred,  
And soft the accents came,  
As if, with all its white and red,  
A blossom told her name.  
She was so fair a maid to love  
That—why I cannot guess—  
I saddened growing conscious of  
My very happiness,  
Though then to me no God could give  
A greater blessing than to live.

Autumn now has come and ends  
The bright months, and the year,  
More coloured than the spring, descends  
To its gold sepulchre.  
The living leaves shall spread no more,  
To drink the thin blue air ;  
Summer has garnered in her store  
And all the world is bare.  
And with the leaves deciduous  
The days have fallen between  
That time when heaven was beauteous  
And all the world was green.  
But now that too my heart receives  
The soft maturing breath,  
Although I have not like the leaves  
Some golden thought of Death,  
I find that it is more fulfilled,  
That days fallen between  
The careless time it first was thrilled,  
Under the shadows green :  
It makes me think of spring new-spread  
To hear the name of Winifred.

OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY.

## SINCERITY.

"BEWARE of that man," said Diderot of Rousseau ; " he believes every word he says ! " We are reminded by such a saying that sincerity, or the habit of throwing the vital powers into our words and actions, so far from being merely the attribute of good and undesigning men, is an engine of influence and innovation within the compass of the few. There are indeed certain men—Rousseau was one of them, and there is no doubt a Rousseau in every man of genius—who are born into the world to apply to our arts and institutions the test of genuine feeling. " I am not like any man whom I have ever seen," said Rousseau ; " I venture to think I am not like any man that ever existed." But he was mistaken. In all the foibles described by him so lovingly in his " Confessions," thousands of readers in every generation since have confessed themselves vicariously. What was so exceptional in Rousseau was the complete absence in him of that power to adapt himself to his environment, a power which almost everyone possesses, and which parents are perhaps right in choosing to encourage in their children rather than genius ; and on the other hand the strength in him of that power whose rarity nature seems to atone for by the enormous attraction and compulsive force with which she occasionally endows it. From time to time a moment befalls when the martyrs of sincerity are transformed into the founders of new eras, and the " creators," to adopt Nietzsche's language, of the " new values." But for Rousseau, if we may accept the testimony of Napoleon, there would have been no French Revolution ; and two centuries earlier, a man who had at first seemed likely to end as one more obscure victim of a sincerity as helpless as that of Rousseau, Martin Luther, apparently by a mere accident, suddenly found on his side the suffrages of men, and himself the honoured father of the coming world.

It is a common fallacy, bequeathed to us perhaps from pre-Lutheran times, that people are by preference and intention insincere, and that the strong man will wear a mask, whereas the truth probably is that insincerity is almost invariably a sign of weakness. If it were in our power to be sincere we should no more think of being insincere than a pleader would bewilder his audience with

subtleties when facts were at his disposal. The power of genius is essentially the same as the disconcerting quality of sincerity when brought face to face with false pretensions. The rest of us are constantly peeling off new wrappings which conceal us from ourselves, and finding that yesterday we acted a part; but the genius is he who has arrived at the basis of his nature and whose morrow belies not his yesterday. Genius is that fire which kindles only the altars of sincerity. To be sincere is what every man, from the poet to the Archbishop of Canterbury, finds his account in being. In literature it is style, as in any high office it is weight and dignity. In politics it gives a comparatively stolid man like Parnell a power with a man so much his superior in finesse and accomplishment as Gladstone. It was his superiority in sincerity which enabled Wordsworth to revolutionize English poetry by launching poems like "Lucy Gray" on the jaded taste of the eighteenth century. If ever we poor pagans, adrift in what Myers called the "interspace between faiths decayed and faiths re-risen," shall devise for ourselves some consoling ritual, it will be one which recalls us, were it only one day in the week, to spiritual nakedness and self-realization. Meanwhile, to have confided oneself even to one's notebook brings relief and peace, as only those actions do which have the sanction of heart, soul and intellect. If we could believe that a certain number of those actions in trade, politics and social life, which make up the world's doings for a day, were done with the whole-heartedness with which, in a lonely country road, one makes an entry in one's notebook, we might believe in the "progress of civilization," and that the world was going excellently well; but it is only those who have no plans and no schemes, and perhaps even not too much brains, who can afford to act and speak only from conviction. Verily we need a brood of fakirs and eremites, with souls uncompromisingly exclusive of the otiose and insincere; poets whose poverty in mere opinion perhaps excludes them from society, but whose rare thoughts have the beauty and finality of wayside flowers.

Most people have at one time or another had the dream of how good a thing it would be to say and do nothing except with sincerity; to say "Thank you" and "Good morning" only when you mean it, to laugh only when amused, to listen only when interested, &c. So resolute an attempt, however, to simplify life, very soon breaks down. To begin with, we ourselves have a dozen different sincerities, a sincerity of ill-humour, of jollity, of cynicism, of

misunderstanding, to mention some of the less worthy kind ; and are we to inflict our moods on our neighbours ? Besides, it is only with the sincere that sincerity is possible ; and as the greater number of those with whom the day's doings bring us into contact have not attained sincerity, we must trim our course as we may among conflicting moods. If it is rare that we are sincere even with ourselves, it is rarer still for two persons to be simultaneously and mutually sincere. Sincerity is attained for the most part in solitude, but even there it is to be feared the necessity of inconstancy and variety pursues us. If we felt the force of those intuitions which visit us so absolutely as to feel them always, we should hardly get through life. We cannot afford to be too sincere. Who has not felt, for example, at certain times that existence itself is something to feel ashamed of, and perhaps even said heartily with Sophocles, "Not to have been born is past utterance the best." Yet to feel this to the exclusion of the ideals of stoicism, of epicureanism, of scepticism, of religion, which in their different ways enable us to live, was impossible not only for Sophocles, who was most likely, like Shakespeare and Goethe, a man of a cheerful and hopeful disposition, but for human nature. The excuse, if one is needed, for this inconstancy to our deepest intuitions is that we are something in ourselves, independently of all the truths we visit as a bee the flower. In reply to that naive inquiry, "What do you believe?" one can only say, This and that ! I can no more tell what I believe than I can tell what the universe believes. The chief event of each day should be a fresh discovery of what one believes, and every mood has its own creed. People sometimes talk as though a creed, capable of weekly recitation, were an essential part of the equipment of life, but really it is surprising how well one can get along without a creed. As the Indian scripture says, "Drinking of the pleasant beverage called the perception of truth, one becomes free from excitement and sin."

It is contended that science and religion are not necessarily opposed, yet it is hardly to be denied that *Scio* has ascended the throne of *Credo*, who sits as a kind of dowager-empress, wearing the insignia of former greatness, and even insisting on precedence, yet yielding all her real authority to her successor. What we "believe" has not the value of what we know ; what we have heard from another we say we believe, but what we have found out for ourselves we know. For a long time humanity, having



quite insufficient notions of the phenomena of external and of human nature, of the stars and the earth and the cause of thunder, formed the habit of distinguishing between the truth of faith and the truth of knowledge. It must, however, be admitted that the notion of faith as a special organ of the human mind is not one which bears examination now. The disappearance of faith simply means that the mind is now called upon to verify things for itself, and to bring them within the range of knowledge. In regard to a difficult and involved subject, for example, like the origins of Christianity, in which certainty is so difficult to arrive at, but in which the well-disposed are not to be satisfied with the mere criticism of commonsense or with denial, a kind of tacit or provisional assent is adopted by minds unable or too indolent to enter on a general examination of the evidence bequeathed to us; but it is quite certain that those who do not attempt such research are at the mercy of those who arrive at their own conclusions in doing so. As we study an age like the fourth century, and gradually gain clear ideas of its various tendencies, conviction inevitably rises in the mind as to the nature of historic Christianity and the claims made for it. Such a study may lead to very different conclusions in different minds—that is a question of temperament or the will to believe—but certainty, whether in affirmation or denial, is only to be gained by resolute inquiry.

The New Testament is generally allowed to exhibit a great advance on the Old in respect of the suppression of that hatred of one's enemies so candidly avowed by David in his Psalms. But to love one's enemies is a different thing from making friends with everybody, a thing impossible. There are persons to whom our true relationship is one of enmity. We can persuade ourselves that we love our enemy, or rather, out of consideration for ourselves, we refrain from breaking through that thin medium of general good will in which we confound our enemy with our friends, until destiny, in some malign hour, throws us into some situation in which we rub shoulders with him all day long, and we discover that the laws of incompatibility of temperament are not to be eluded by any counsel of perfection. To love each man is doubtless the goal to aim at, but until love, hatred! To pray for the discomfiture of our enemies indicates a frame of mind far more likely to succeed in bringing about an ultimate rapprochement than to acquiesce in the continuance of a mutual toleration in which our attitude towards mankind at large, generally egoistic, is not

particularized into a personal relationship. Perhaps when our enemy is discomfited and punished as we believe he deserves, we shall find him tractable and accessible, a man whom one can love. What each man really is, is disguised from us in most cases by circumstances which preclude a genuine contract with him at any point, and to upset these false relations and substitute true ones, the lever of hatred may be meanwhile necessary. On the whole, next to love, this hatred is the highest compliment which we can pay to our neighbour, and the most promising of a happy eventuation. A lover will not hear of any sentiment between love and hatred from his mistress, and we see that mortal enemies, when brought face to face in a duel, are willing to die to give each other "satisfaction." In the pure ether of the inmost consciousness, the region in which the Gospels call upon us to live, where identity is perceived, we may love our neighbour truly as ourselves; to meet him at all in that region is to love him as ourselves. But to love the man whose true personality we cannot reach because of the circumstances which make him our obstacle, it is needful to break down those barriers first. The confusion of thought which enjoins a quite impracticable non-resistance to evil is most apparent in those schemes, nursed by "peace-congresses" and the like, for the abolition of war, and which seem to suggest that nations (of all things!) should behave toward one another in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. War is not necessarily any violation of the Sermon on the Mount, but a collision of one nexus of circumstances with another. How can Englishmen be said to hate Russians, whom they have never seen? On the contrary, when we read Russian novels, we find they are just the same as ourselves. No, war is the price we pay for the absurdities which from indolent dislike of change and consideration for our comfort, we tolerate in our political institutions, religion, social customs, etc., maintaining at all costs the *status quo*—absurd monarchs, absurd Popes and Archbishops, absurd grandes dames, absurd defence of weakness and inanity against natural and divine right. Were the states founded on reason and on equity there would be no war; but being founded on precedent and expediency, with occasional admissions perforce of universally accepted principles, there is ceaseless oscillation, temporizing, and adaptation to circumstances, which demand a specially qualified and privileged statecraft. Our idealists have begun to cry out for anarchy as the ideal, and a pious horror at the word

runs down the spine of constitutionalism: but if the nations of Europe and of the world should ever indeed clash in that Armageddon for which it is the function of statecraft to be prepared at any moment, we shall see what we shall see; perhaps some huge concession to the evangel of the simplification of life and of sincerity, for a parallel to which we may have to look back beyond the final capitulation of the Roman Emperors to Christianity.

The true antithesis to anarchy both in the world of thought and affairs is not conformity but mentality; for mind is the eternal conqueror of anarchy. To be interested in things solves a whole universe of doubts and dismays. The great modern lesson that we have learned is that we must live creatively. Our faith must continually bring forth new objects. Truth is not in the thing said or believed, but in the man who says or believes it, and the language of truth is changing every hour on our lips. In the decline of tradition and of authority we are indeed lost if a faculty of discrimination do not rise up in us of what is genuine and what is unreal in the world of men and of thought, which must take the place in us of the old respect for the Fathers, the Church, and the Bible. So far as we are sincere and genuine ourselves we shall be able to recognise these qualities outside us, and to bring to bear on the men and things we have to do with a test more searching and more real than that of tradition.

JOHN EGLINTON.

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### O'CONNELL BRIDGE.

I gazed along the waters at the west,  
 Watching the low sky colour into flame,  
 Until each narrowing steeple I could name,  
 Grew dark as the far vapours; and my breast  
 With silence like a sorrow was possessed,  
 And men as moving shadows went and came;  
 The smoke that stained the sunset seemed like  
 Smouldering, or some great evil unexpressed.

Then with a longing for the taintless air,  
 I called that desolation back again,  
 Which reigned when Liffey's widening banks were bare:  
 Before Ben Edair gazed upon the Dane,  
 Before the Hurdle Ford, and long before  
 Fionn drowned the young men by its meadowy shore.  
 O. G.

## IS THE GAELIC LEAGUE A PROGRESSIVE FORCE ?

THE Gaelic League has assuredly now reached a point when the task of examining and estimating its total effect on the national life ought to be undertaken in a fair and unprejudiced spirit. It is not, however, suggested for a moment that the following pages contain more than hints for such an undertaking ; but these hints are put forward for what they may be worth.

That the Gaelic League is popular goes without saying. It may or may not be popular with the governing classes—though from them it has met with a benevolent neutrality, if not an encouragement, which no previous national movement ever received—but it is certainly popular with the people, the Church, and the press. In fact, the Gaelic League has got to the stage when its “popularity” might well be embarrassing to its best friends. There is an old proverb which warns us to beware when all men praise us, and at times the unanimous chorus of approval of the Gaelic League from all quarters might well rouse suspicion. Its work is applauded by Cardinal Logue, Mr. W B. Yeats, Sir Horace Plunkett and *The United Irishman* newspaper, Lord Monteagle and the *Freeman's Journal*, Mr John Redmond and the *Leader*. And assuredly if the League is tending to realise the ultimate objects of some of these men and newspapers, it cannot be tending to realise the objects of others of them.

Now, obviously, the League propaganda centres in the language, the revival of the ancient tongue of Ireland. Other allied movements, and of these I shall speak presently, are collateral and subsidiary. But the revival of the language is the pivot on which the Gaelic League turns. On what scientific grounds, then, is the revival of Irish urged ? It is pressed on the ground that it was once the national language of Ireland, and that in adopting it again Ireland will be differentiating herself from all other nations and proving her own individuality. Moreover it is contended that English literature and habits of thought are debased and debasing, whilst the Irish language and literature is superior and elevating.

These arguments have always appeared to me rather faulty. In the first place individuality in man or nation is

not a thing to be directly sought ; it is a by-product of the whole nature. When a man has to deliberately emphasise his individuality by artificially doing something out of the common, real individuality is at a minimum. What really gives a noble distinction to a man or nation is not the language they speak or the kind of dress they wear ; it is their culture, their science, their art. When we meet a man whose conversation and bearing exhibit independence of character and freshness of outlook we say we have met a man of "individuality." But "individuality" is probably the last thing of which such a one is consciously thinking. And I confess when I see the young men and women rushing to acquire the rudiments of Irish (and it seldom gets beyond that) in order to show they are not as other nations, the phenomenon seems to me to have something of pathos in it. Let me, however, not be misunderstood. The desire for political independence is admirable ; that counts for real manhood. Only a nation of slaves would contentedly resign themselves to be governed by another nation. But the mere desire to speak another language does not of necessity at all correlate with the active desire for political freedom. On the contrary the Gaelic League leaders do not seem to be at all such keen lovers of liberty as plenty of the mere English-speaking Irishmen before them. To make Irish, or even the desire to acquire it, the test of Nationalism would shut out some of the best men who have served the cause of Irish liberty in the past. Parnell, for instance, assuredly wrought for Ireland at least as well, according to his lights, as any man who ever lived ; but Parnell did not know Irish or endeavour to learn it. In fact it has often seemed to me that the language-movement has acted as a soothing rather than a stimulating influence on the political movement. If the Irish people could be lulled to rest with a new toy in the shape of a new tongue, their English governors need not grieve. And it is to a realisation of this fact that I attribute, in some degree, the participation in Gaelic League work of men who would not connect themselves with any other national work whatever. One of the historic methods of political reactionaries is to turn any really progressive movement into harmless channels ; a foreign war is a favourite device for accomplishing such an end ; it provides a distraction and produces a crop of military problems in place of the political ones which previously occupied the stage. May not a language movement, then, unconsciously serve a similar end ? And if the people are content to let the substance of liberty go

for the gew-gaw of a new grammar, so much the better—for the reactionaries. In short, I want to know how men are necessarily to be made better Nationalists, by which term I mean active lovers of Irish liberty, by knowing Irish, or how the fact of being English-speaking in any way hinders them in that respect. Swift, Wolfe Tone, Moore, Davis, Duffy, Mangan, Fintan Lalor, Mitchel, D'Arcy McGee, John O'Leary, Speranza, Carleton, Kickham, Banim, the Sullivans, John Boyle O'Reilly, Standish O'Grady, and Yeats—all these, and I have named, at random, poets, politicians, economists, historians, and men of letters, all these wrote in English. And surely to argue that the language which was good enough for them to sing their love of Ireland in, and preach to Ireland in, is not good enough for us, savours somewhat of priggishness. In fact one might challenge any Gaelic Leaguer to produce from *Irish* literature a list of inspirers at all comparable to that I have given of writers in English. It is not surely the language a man writes in that matters, it is the mind that moves him. And when I see the young scholars of the League substituting the "Love Songs of Connacht" for "The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)," and that is what is tending to take place, I ask myself, is this a step forward or backward? Because there is undoubtedly a good deal of extravagance, to use a mild word, in the claim that mediæval Irish literature can supply the place for a modern mind of modern literature. And in saying this I do not in the least disparage the beauty of the old literature in its place and as a light on the age that produced it. But as each age has to live in itself and face its own problems, so we have to live by present lights and not by those of, say, Brian, who himself had to do the same.

The truth is, however, that most of the leaders of the Gaelic League appear to desire a return to mediævalism, in thought, in literature, in pastimes, in music, and even in dress. And the fact that this desire is impossible of realisation does not affect those who proclaim it, and does not lessen its practical injuriousness. For instance, in Father Dinneen's recently published *Lectures on the Irish Language Movement* this aim is evident on every page. He is full of denunciation for English "literature," without qualification. Father Dinneen writes: "This country is, to a large extent still untainted by the teaching of the positivist, the materialist, the hedonist which pervades English literature whether serious or trivial. Now it is obvious that if the literature that is most widely read and studied and imitated

in Ireland come to us across the Channel, it will be difficult to prevent that literature from planting the seeds of social disorder and moral degeneracy amongst even our still untainted population." But if Irish character is so untainted and pure why should it prefer English trash to good English literature? And what guarantee is there that a population with such tastes will not, by their demand, create a supply of trivial and trashy writing in Gaelic? In another sentence Father Dinneen says: "That English literature will of a necessity be largely studied amongst us is obvious, but that study will be robbed of much of its evil if we have side by side with it a native literature, redolent of native tradition and inspired by the spirit that moulded our history." Assuredly for my own part I could name a dozen English authors with more modesty and more light than is revealed in that sentence. To talk of "robbing" Shakespeare and Browning, Lamb and Coleridge of their "evil" by the circulation of pleasant and harmless folk tales in Gaelic is so grotesque as only to be redeemed by the obvious seriousness which Father Dinneen brings to all his work and which even shines through these lectures. As to the question of positivism and science Father Dinneen is in a curious position. For he urges that "our Irish-speaking population . . . . must be in touch with the life-throb of modern civilisation," and further tells us that "the English language . . . . is far behind French and German in recent scientific works and in recent works of general literature," which I think is largely true. But Father Dinneen must surely know that the "positivist" spirit he deplores is more or less characteristic of *all* modern literature and much more characteristic of French and German scientific literature even than of English. The truth is that modern knowledge and the positivist spirit are correlative and to keep out the one it would be necessary to keep out the other also. And to keep out both is, I think, the aim, explicit or implicit, of many Gaelic Leaguers, whose ideal is a purely folk-ideal—a folk literature, a folk drama, and a folk art. All the while to correct the shortcomings of English science (whatever they may be) by advocating the study of Gaelic which has no modern scientific literature whatever, good or bad, positivist or otherwise, is like trying to save yourself from the heat of the frying pan by jumping into the fire.

Let me, however, not be thought to be making a partisan case. All public movements and especially such subtle movements as that under discussion have mixed and



diverse results, and their total effect cannot be expressed in any single formula. Thus there is to be set on the other side of the account the fact that the League has brought a spirit of study into the country, has evoked a great amount of self-sacrificing work that in itself compels admiration, whatever its ultimate result, and in addition has stimulated a feeling of indifference for England that is a needed variation on the traditional Irish attitude towards England of appeal, apology and abuse. When the prowess and glory of England are sung to us in every key, it is well occasionally to frankly admit that we have nothing in our own history to exactly compare with the England of Clive, of the Chinese Opium War, of the African Concentration Camps and the Peaceful Mission to Tibet. But such moments of reminiscence should be judiciously restricted. A nation is not morally raised by dwelling on its own past glories or its neighbours' present sins; it is raised by increasing its ability to deal with its present problems, political, economic, and social, in a spirit of equity and a spirit of knowledge. But these beneficent spirits can be evoked and nourished quite efficiently, it seems to me, without putting on Ireland the enormous burden of adopting what is now virtually a new language, for no better reason than the sentimental one that she once spoke it. The truth is that, given the solution of our political problem, the solution of the others will merely depend on all the modern light we can get; whilst the stress laid on the teaching of Gaelic tends to obscure even some of these. Thus, for instance, the degradation of taste deplored by Father Dinneen and others is not the result of speaking English; it is a result of the industrial system, of long hours and fatiguing work in towns, with scanty leisure, and is more or less characteristic of all modern industrial communities. So far, however, from evading that industrialism most Gaelic Leaguers stand for its extension, without, at the same time bothering themselves much or sympathising much with the attempts to control and mitigate its evils by socialist reformers in other countries. No mediæval literature can possibly supply any guidance on these complicated but inevitable issues, and though the mythical prowess of Cuchullain and the beauty of Maeve may be fine imaginative themes, they may be overdone. Assuredly in the realms of modern science there are stories as wonderful and at least more profitable than the careers of fabled gods and demi-gods in the Ireland of a thousand years ago.

FREDERICK RYAN.



## A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

Most readers will find in Mr. Swinburne's new volume, "A Channel Passage," a fair amount of verse which they have seen already in various periodicals during the past dozen years. This is not the Swinburne who makes drunken the ardent youth who at their due season mouth rapturously his splendid rolling verses, and incessantly repeat his melodious lyrics of the earlier days, their souls reeling and dizzied by what Browning might call his "merry-go-down" liquor, the mere bouquet of which is of so marvellous a potency. Rhythm, form, and sound, are the same as of old,—“the hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice——.” With one or two exceptions there is a general flatness and uninspiredness everywhere apparent, especially in what I might call his topical verses, occasioned by political or historical occurrences such as the Dreyfus case or the recent war in South Africa. There are some really dreadful things in these poems, unaccountably bad, unpardonably tasteless. Who could imagine Swinburne passing such a verse as this, speaking of insincere promises of Mr. Gladstone.

“Can it be that he who said so, saying so, winked?”

That is deadly prose, cast like half-molten metal into a metrical mould whose shape it stubbornly refuses to take. The prologues written for certain Elizabethan plays have an exasperating similarity, even a marked use of the same rhymes and phrasing; the ideas are almost identical in each; the frame is always the same. These topical poems and prologues are decidedly inferior not merely to the poet's previous work, but also to the rest of the volume, which contains some very fine things indeed; in particular the poems of Hawthorntide, and a centenary ode on Burns, which is both magnificent verse and true criticism. Here is the last stanza.

Earth and the snow-dimmed heights of air  
And water winding soft and fair  
Through still sweet places, bright and bare,  
By bent and byre,  
Taught him what hearts within them were :  
But his was fire.

“New Year's Eve” is a dirge for Christina Rossetti, worthy of its subject. Among the best of all are “At a

Dog's Grave," and some child-verses worthy of his achievements as laureate of baby-land, "Three Weeks Old."

Three weeks since there was no such rose in being ;  
 Now may eyes made dim with deep delight  
 See how fair it is, laugh with love, and seeing  
 Praise the chance that bids us bless the sight.

Three weeks old, and a very rose of roses,  
 Bright and sweet as love is sweet and bright ;  
 Heaven and earth, till a man's life wanes and closes  
 Show not life or love a lovelier sight.

Three weeks past have renewed the rosebright creature  
 Day by day with life, and night by night,  
 Love, though fain of its every faultless feature,  
 Finds not words to match the silent sight.

The book is inscribed to William Morris and Burne-Jones, friends of the poet's earliest youth, both, alas, gone from us. If we compare it with "The Death of Oenone," we must acknowledge that "A Channel Passage" is very inferior to that work of Tennyson's old age. As a whole, it gives an impression of weakness by no means apparent in "Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards": perhaps the subjects of many of the poems are not very interesting, their moment is past; they seem like the souls of the Grecian fable forbidden to pass the Styx, and kept from the draught of Lethe which is the only thing they crave.

Just a century ago Dublin saw the paltry street riot in which bubbled out the great designs and lofty hopes of Robert Emmet. There is very little to know of him. When he died he was only five and twenty, and his story is brief and piteous. Miss Louise Guiney's delightful little book on Emmet, which she calls a survey of his rebellion and of his romance, in one hundred and three pages tells practically everything that is worth telling, and tells it charmingly except for some stray lapses from good English, which though not very flagrant are yet quite unmistakeable. This is almost a lyrical story of Emmet, wholly disregarding the political side of his affair, concerned more with himself and his lover, Sarah Curran, and the tragedy of youth and enthusiasm. Everyone knows the outlines of Emmet's life, how he was born in a house in Stephen's Green, educated in Dublin University; when twenty he left College owing to the '98 agitation, and within a year he had so effectually bestirred himself that a warrant was issued for his arrest. He went to France, where he stayed nearly three years, coming back to Dublin in October, 1802. Next April his father died, and Emmet devoted two

thousand five hundred pounds, his share of the estate, to preparations for a revolt, all the details of which he elaborately planned himself, confiding the knowledge of his plots and arrangements to as few people as possible. His industry was untiring, and everything was determined with the most minute precision; every night his agents reported to himself exactly what was taking place, he held every thread in his own hands, he knew what he wanted to do, and the means he meant to employ. Yet when the time came, everything went wrong. An explosion in one of his Dublin magazines led him to declare hostilities prematurely. The time was hurriedly fixed for July 23, 1803, early in the evening. The gentlemen leaders and the trusty battalions failed to appear, instead there gathered many unknown, a mob, the drunken refuse of the city taverns; the cramp-irons, the scaling-ladders, the blunderbusses, the fuses, nothing was ready; signals had been delayed or suppressed; the prepared slow-matches were mixed in with others; in a word slackness and treachery were combined for ruin. The Wicklow men got no message; the Wexford men waited in vain for orders all the night through; the men of Kildare came into town, were dissatisfied, and went home. And so the rising effected nothing except the wretched murder of Lord Kilwarden, and a confused affray, in which the whole number of slain was under fifty. Emmet made for the Wicklow hills, where Dwyer and his men were, but he refused to fight further when it could avail nothing. He might have got away from Ireland to safety, but instead he foolishly stole back to Dublin to see Sarah Curran, to learn how she looked upon him, or whether she would share his exile. For that folly he paid his life; she would not go with him, he stayed and was arrested, and on September 30 he was hanged in Thomas Street and beheaded. Three years later Sarah Curran married Captain Sturgeon, and died in May, 1808.

Poor Emmet! A visionary and dreamer, thinking all men as high-minded and pure of motive as himself, it is sad to realise that he was only a tool, the catspaw of other men, more cautious, more experienced in life and the ways of the world. It is almost certain, too, that the Government party knew all about the projected rising from its very inception, and that he was allowed to go on with it to serve their ends. "If the failure were not so piteous, because of our interest in the doomed wizard and his suddenly disenchanted wand, it would be grotesque." Tilting at wind-

mills is a hopeless business, the great arms go round steadily, implacable, remorseless, and hurl the champion to the ground,—or to the skies. And Emmet has indeed taken a supreme place in the hearts of the Irish people as their darling who died for them, he is beside Lord Edward in their thought; the print of Emmet in the dock hangs in nearly every house with the portraits of the king and queen, and he is as dearly loved because of his sad love story as for his attempt to strike for Ireland. There was in truth much in Emmet to love: his lofty character, high spirit, splendid chivalry, unfailing generosity, keen honour, implicit confidence and faith in his fellows, delicacy of feeling and refinement, all were beyond the slightest doubt or tarnish. If in his speech from the dock the reference to Sarah Curran jar on us, we should remember that the time was the epoch of sentimentality, that Emmet was, but twenty-five, and knew that his life would next day be torn from him; that youth thinks he has counted the cost, but only when the price is levied does he realise how great it is, and also there is a pathetic wish to have the full extent of the sacrifice understood, in a word a yearning for sympathy that can be felt, such a yearning as was Peter Harpdon's before his slaying. His request to be allowed to wear his green uniform at his execution "not that I have any hope of obtaining it but that I may be known to have made it,"—marks the same craving for other men's high opinion, which it would be harsh to call melodramatic. His hesitation on the scaffold to give the fatal signal is inexpressibly touching: the executioner twice asked if he was ready, and twice Emmet replied 'No.' A terrible moment,—to be five and twenty, and have to leave everything, all he meant to be and do. It is always sad to be ineffective, "to be weak is miserable"; there is something savagely fine about a cornered wolf that

"Dies in silence, biting hard  
Among the biting hounds."

The beast must be killed, but no one offers him the last insult of pity. Emmet with the best and highest motives, and with the full sanction of his conscience and training attempted what he had no means of carrying out; his proposed resources were impossible, and success would have been far from bringing about the results he desired: his passion was the *libertatis sacra fames* of all noble souls, but he ran counter to the whole order of the universe, and he failed. The great truths of life are chilly things.

F. M. ATKINSON.

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